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FEB 24 2004

Mr. G. John Baughman  
Executive Vice President  
International Association of Fish  
and Wildlife Agencies  
444 North Capitol Street, N.W., Suite 544  
Washington, D.C. 20001

Dear Mr. Baughman:

Based on our recent discussions, the Service has established Development Assistance Teams in each Region and firming up our ideas for the National Advisory Acceptance Team. We look forward to working together with the States through these groups to strengthen our partnership as we approach the final 20 months of State Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan Development.

The Assistant Regional Directors (ARDs) for Migratory Birds and State Programs will lead the Region Development Assistance Teams. The Teams consist of two subgroups. One will focus on 'process' questions from the States and will be handled primarily by Federal Assistance and associated members of Teaming with Wildlife Working Group. The other subgroup will involve all of our Divisions and will tackle 'content'-related queries from the States concerning information or expertise that resides within the Service. The ARDs will serve a pivotal role as a communication contact person to direct requests to the appropriate personnel.

The National Advisory Acceptance Team will have a quality control function and will work with States to ensure that all State Plans contain the eight essential elements required by the State Wildlife Grant program legislation. The Assistant Director for Migratory Birds and State Programs will lead this Team. Members of this Team include all ARDs for Migratory Birds and State Programs: a representative from the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and a State agency representative from each of the four Regional fish and wildlife associations. We anticipate this Team will begin to function this spring. If possible, we would like to take advantage of the North American Wildlife Conference in March for the Team to have its first meeting.

The Service recognizes the challenges that many States face in developing and implementing these extremely critical Plans, and intends to assist our wildlife conservation partners in all ways possible. As always, we look forward to strengthening our partnership in the months and years to come.

Sincerely,

Steve Williams

DIRECTOR

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FA Reading File  
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